



Public Comments from June 7 Community Forum

At the Community Forum on Tuesday, we had three places in the agenda for public comments; after Bruce Lorig's presentation, after Tony Mazzella's CTIP update, and at the end of the forum. In addition to spoken comments and questions, we received six of the blue "We Want to Hear From You" forms. They begin on page 4.

Comments and Questions on Northgate Commons

Comment: How many units?

Bruce Lorig responds: I can't say with certainty, but about 350 units plus the ERA Care facility.

Comment: Will there be a playground for the children who live there?

Bruce Lorig responds: At this density, we don't expect many children. For children any older than very small children, there would be no place to dissipate their tremendous energy.

Comment: I'm concerned about your answer regarding children. Will there be safeguards to protect children from the water in Thornton Creek?

Seattle Public Utilities staff responds: The water will be very shallow, but it is something we are considering in the design of the space.

Comment: Regarding availability of a play ground: There will be one across the street in the Library and Community Center site. Regarding the cinema: There was one at the Simon mall. I've also read that movie attendance is on the decline. Is a cinema the right thing to put here?

Elizabeth Puccinelli of Century Cinemas responds: Simon didn't have adequate space, in their view, to build a modern, state-of-the-art facility. The movie industry is strong. Our company has been in business for sixty years and every one of them has been profitable. The movie industry is here to stay.

Comment: What is the price and size range of the condominiums?

Bruce Lorig responds: Not completely determined yet, but studios, 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom and 2 bedroom plus den units. One and 2 bedroom units, approximately \$1,000 - \$1,400 a month.

Comment: How many seats in this 16-screen complex?

Elizabeth Puccinelli responds: 3,200 seats. Although that sounds like a lot, on a typical peak night only about half of these will be full.

Comment: What kind of parking demand are you expecting?

Bruce Lorig responds: At peak times, about 550 spaces will be available for the cinema and about 600 spaces will be needed. King County's property and on-street parking is available to meet the additional demand.

Comment: Is there a market for so large a cinema?

Elizabeth Puccinelli responds: We believe there is market for an even larger cinema.

Comment: Can you give us examples of senior housing projects by ERA Care Communities?

Bruce Lorig responds: ERA Care Communities is a local company. Examples are the Lakeshore, Ida Culver House I and II [Ravenna and Broadview], University House in Wallingford. Lorig Associates is a local company too. Our offices are in the Pike Place Market. We've done about 22 projects, including the Uwajimaya Village, and a low-income housing project with the Tacoma Housing Authority.

Comment: I hear you say about 350 to 375 units. How many parking spaces will you provide?

Bruce Lorig responds: About 900 spaces for the entire project.

Comment (Stakeholder Janice Camp): How will these big projects be factored into the CTIP planning?

Tony Mazzella responds: The mall redevelopment, the Lorig project, and others are what we call pipeline projects. We know a great deal about them and we include estimates of their impacts in our planning, and this is better information than more general estimates of an area's growth.

Comment: Will you consider noise pollution from the cars. All the houses near the freeway are being sold by the owners and are becoming renter-occupied.

Noise from I-5, especially from the deteriorating pavement. Please consider ways to alleviate the noise pollution.

Tony Mazzella responds: Washington Department of Transportation is preparing to rebuild I-5. The new reinforced concrete should help alleviate noise. Asphalt cover is quieter, but deteriorates more rapidly and requires more frequent resurfacing.

Comment (Stakeholder Janice Camp): Could you talk about the funding strategies for CTIP?

Tony Mazzella responds: The objective of the Northgate CTIP is to help make Northgate projects more competitive within the Department of transportation's capital projects ranking system. Financing strategies is one of the CTIP components. The top-tier CTIP projects should be very competitive for funding.

Comment: What are they considering for the upzone of Northgate?

Jackie Kirn responds: DPD was directed to explore why Northgate is slow in meeting its growth objectives as an Urban Center. Zoning is only one of many potential tools and factors to analyze that are under consideration.

Comment (Chuck Dolan): Will the water channel be fish-passable? Seattle Public Utilities is claiming no knowledge of the fact that the channel was meant to be fish-passable. I fought prior projects to make the creek a home for both fish and people. Re: the Lorig project: Lot of good there, especially the new Third Avenue. My concerns are the scale of the movie theater, impacts of cut-through traffic, 500 units of housing but no services besides restaurants. The residents will need more than entertainment. I wanted to hear more about Northgate Mall's new parking structure and the south end of the mall's connections. We don't want another Target parking garage. We need services there to make pedestrian connections work. If dense housing happens as far north as 125th, those trips are going to happen in cars.

Jackie Kirn responds: Regarding fish: The channel is designed to treat runoff. The vegetation will be a biologically sound environment, but the water channel is not designed to host fish passage. Re: mall redevelopment plans: Simon is incorporating pedestrian connections around the south parking garage. There will also be new crosswalks across 103rd.

Comment (Ken Meyer): My biggest concerns are traffic and parking. People will continue to come to Northgate by car. It's beside the freeway. To the extent this isn't broken, please don't fix it. Tonight, I found out there's this upzoning in

the works. These objectives are incompatible. Don't get too excited about the drawings. Better to deal with this problem before it happens. Re: Parking: If cinema takes up 600 parking spaces, and if each residence has about two cars, this project will need over 1000 spaces. Lorig's project can't share with Metro without new kinds of parking restrictions. Metro will pay a lot to Lorig for use of its spaces. That will be a taxpayer-supported subsidy of this project, and not the only one. Lorig also gets a \$7 million open space water feature through its property.

Comment (Jessica Coburn): I'd like to add my concern that we need a grocery store more than we need a movie theater. I'm also so concerned by the new wildlife habitat so close to the new theater, where they will be subject to the bright lights.

Comment (Roy Smith): I also had thought the water quality channel would be fish habitat. I support the right kind of culverts under 5th Avenue to support that. Re: Parking and traffic: I don't think there will be two parking spaces used by every unit. Renters will have to pay for an additional space, or even for the first space. Given the location near transit, less parking is good, and more parking would make the transit less viable. Free parking subsidizes driving.

Comment: We need a network of small collector buses to serve the elderly residents. A circular route that connects to the main transit lines and neighborhood places would make sense.

Comment (Stakeholder Janet Way): For us to have gotten this far, but no fish passage? Seattle wants to be a leader in environmental protection, but we need to take the next step. As of last year, the stakeholders and public expected the Thornton Creek channel to be fish-passable. This is important to the community. We need to do what it takes to make it fish-passable. Work with the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Don't fear them. We can help SPU find creative ways to make this happen.

Written Comments

- ▶ I feel that my comments were heard and recorded, but I'm not sure they will be considered in the future.
 - Don't give up in trying for a grocery store for the Commons, even a small, locally owned shop.
 - Fish-passable creek is VERY important.
- ▶ Continued kudos to Lorig for their work and for their willingness to engage the community in details of their development to a degree unparalleled in most design/development process. Thornton Creek Channel should allow fish passage. Department of Fish and Wildlife, SPU, and other City departments

need to work together to allow fish, knowing that there will be the need to work in the channel and disturb habitat. There needs to be a public discussion about how to make this work instead of the City Law Department saying “no.”

▶ *[Comment sheet has a map drawn, indicating Northgate Way at I-5.]* This is the only meaningful crossing of I-5 until you get down to 50th. Consequently there is currently a lot of traffic on Northgate Way all the way to Aurora. This plan seems like it is going to create a major bottleneck in the area.

▶ Want to make sure that enough attention is being paid for maintaining healthy fish habitat to bring salmon and trout to Thornton Creek. I’m concerned about the amount of cars coming into the Northgate area. Living in the Northgate area, it seems like major traffic congestion and other safety issues around the increase in traffic have to happen before the City responds.

▶ Thornton Creek must be designed to provide fish habitat for salmon and cutthroat trout fish passage! Department of Fish and Wildlife states it is possible. It was designed by P. Gaynor to be fish passage. Weirs are part of design that makes fish habitat. I still see no parking on 5th Avenue NE for overflow parking that will be needed. Seniors in ERA facility need space to park cars even if they don’t drive often. Big “spillover” in Broadview Ida Culver complex. Not fair to neighbors.

▶ I’m concerned about the lack of planning for children. Children help bind a community together and help neighbors get to know each other. Aside from, perhaps, the condos, it appears you expect the apartments to have a high turnover. Would it not be better to create a real community consisting of families? The high density does not preclude this if it is planned for. In addition, by planning for children, you help control urban sprawl.